

For Immediate Release

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*Washington, D.C.* – Congressman Albio Sires hosted a briefing today with Olympic Gold Medalist Cullen Jones and panelists from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the USA Swimming Foundation to discuss the importance of drowning prevention. At the hearing, Jones shared his own stories about his love for swimming in addition to promoting water safety and the need for prevention methods.

Congressman Sires expressed his concern on the startling statistics on drowning rates in America, especially in underserved communities. “An average of 9 people fatally drown each day in our country, and drowning is the second most common cause of death among children,” said Sires. “On top of that, these rates are considerably higher among minority children.”

The panelists focused on raising awareness to the dangers of drowning and the need for prevention methods such as swimming lessons. Research conducted by the NIH showed a correlation between swimming lessons and the prevention of drowning. The panel also stressed the importance of pairing swimming lessons with other prevention methods, such as pool fencing and adult supervision for a comprehensive drowning prevention strategy. Ultimately, the panelists agreed that parents must be vigilant about protecting their children while swimming and use additional prevention measures.

Last September, Congressman Sires led the unanimous passage of a resolution in the House of Representatives which recognized the persistently high rates of drowning fatalities among children. “While this resolution played a part in highlighting this issue, gatherings like this one are so important to increasing awareness and protecting the safety of our children,” said Sires.

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